

VZCZCXRO2471
OO RUEHBC RUEHDE RUEHKUK RUEHROV
DE RUEHEG #3562 3651613
ZNY CCCCC ZZH
O 311613Z DEC 07
FM AMEMBASSY CAIRO
TO RUEHC/SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 7818
INFO RUEHEE/ARAB LEAGUE COLLECTIVE IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L CAIRO 003562

SIPDIS

SIPDIS

E.O. 12958: DECL: 12/31/2017
TAGS: [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [SY](#) [LE](#) [EG](#)
SUBJECT: MUBARAK SPEAKS OUT AGAINST SYRIA IN LEBANON

REF: A. CAIRO 3427
[1](#)B. CAIRO 3412

Classified By: Ambassador Francis J. Ricciardone
Reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d)

[1](#)1. (C) Egyptian FM Aboul Gheit emphasized to Ambassador and a visiting Congressional delegation led by Senator Voinovich December 31 that Egypt was taking a firm public stance supporting election of a Lebanese president. Aboul Gheit cited Mubarak's December 30 joint press conference with French President Sarkozy, in which Mubarak demanded that Syria, by name, use its influence to allow the election of a Lebanese president. For good measure, Mubarak reportedly added that it is "illogical" for an Arab state to be without a president or government, and paralyzed for a long period of time.

[1](#)2. (C) Aboul Gheit said that the current political impasse in Lebanon is "all part of an Iranian game," and that Tehran's influence on Damascus, and into Lebanon, is very strong. For its part, Syria's main fear is that the U.N. special tribunal on Lebanon and the assassination of Rafik Hariri will proceed. If it does, according to Aboul Gheit, Syria will "put Lebanon in flames."

[1](#)3. (C) Aboul Gheit told the delegation that Egypt had pressed the Arab League to hold an extraordinary ministerial meeting regarding Lebanon on January 6. In a subsequent conversation, MFA Cabinet Advisor Nazih Neggary told us that Aboul Gheit had sent a letter on/about December 28 to Secretary General Amre Moussa requesting such a Lebanon

SIPDIS

meeting, but that when Moussa announced the meeting, he said that it would focus on Palestinian developments. At that point, Neggary said the Egyptian MFA countered by telling journalists off the record that in fact the meeting was about Lebanon (note: media reports of December 31 reported this, citing "diplomatic sources.") Ultimately, according to Neggary, Moussa sent a note verbale December 31 to all Arab League members that the meeting would be concerned with Lebanon.

[1](#)4. (U) Congressional delegation:
Senator George Voinovich (R-OH)
Congressman Mike Turner (R-OH)
Congressman Steve Pearce (R-NM)
Congressman Rob Bishop (R-UT)
Congressman Phil Gingrey (R-GA)
Ricciardone